

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
-----201757Z 028746 /41

O 201642Z APR 77

FM AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9627

INFO USMISSION NATO IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L BRUSSELS 03934

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, NATO, BE

SUBJECT: CONSULTATIONS ON MAY NAC MEETING

REF: BRUSSELS 3855

1. FOREIGN MINISTRY'S CHIEF OF NATO AFFAIRS, ERIK BAL, WAS CALLED BACK FROM SICK LEAVE DUE MINOR SURGERY TODAY TO FORMULATE AND COORDINATE BELGIAN GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO OUR APRIL 19 PRESENTATION (REFTEL).

2. BAL PROVIDED US WITH FOLLOWING BELGIAN POSITION ON MAY NAC CONSULTATIONS:

(A) BELGIAN GOVERNMENT APPRECIATES OPPORTUNITY TO CONSULT WITH USG.

(B) BELGIAN GOVERNMENT BELIEVES THAT CONSULTATIONS WITHIN NATO FRAMEOWK SHOULD TAKE PLACE IN PARALLEL WITH ANY BILATERAL CONSULTATIONS IN WASHINGTON. IF ANY PRIORITY IS TO BE ACCORDED TO EITHER BILATERAL OR MULTILATERAL CONSULTATIONS, IT SHOULD BE ACCORDED TO MULTILATERAL CONSULTATIONS WITHIN NATO. IN TAKING THIS POSITION, THE BELGIANS ARE FULLY AWARE THAT THERE MAY BE GREATER INCONVENIENCE IN MULTILATERAL CONSULTATIONS, BUT CONSIDER THAT SUCH CONSULTATIONS ARE AN "ARTICLE OF

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FAITH" FOR MEMBERS OF NATO. THE BELGIANS DO NOT WANT TO REAK WITH THE TRADITION OF HAVING MULTILATERAL CONSULTATIONS IN NATO.

3. WE WERE INFORMED THAT BOTH THE HIGHEST LEVELS OF THE FOREIGN MINISTRY AND OF THE BELGIAN DELEGATION TO NATO INDEPENDENTLY ARRIVED AT THIS POSITION, WHICH WAS THEN COORDINATED PRIOR TO BEING PASSED

TO US.

4. COMMENT: BELGIAN POSITION IS CONSISTENT WITH NUMEROUS INDICATIONS
WE HAVE RECEIVED (AND REPORTED) IN THE PAST. THEY PLACE GREAT
IMPORTANCE ON THE FORM OF CONSULTATIONS AND PLACE TOP PRIORITY ON
MULTILATERAL CONSULTATIONS WITHIN THE TWO MAJOR INTERNATIONAL
ORGANIZATIONS TO WHICH THEY BELONG, NATO AND THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

FORM AND LOCALE FOR CONSULTATIONS ARE CONSCIOUS AND BASIC ELEMENTS
OF BELGIAN FOREIGN POLICY.RENNER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptoning: Z
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: ALLIANCE, COMMITTEE MEETINGS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 20-Apr-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 22 May 2009
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977BRUSSE03934
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770137-0514
Format: TEL
From: BRUSSELS
Handling Restrictions:
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Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770440/aaaabhwz.tel
Line Count: 72
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
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Office: ACTION SS
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: 77 BRUSSELS 3855
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 24-Nov-2004 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2756214
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: CONSULTATIONS ON MAY NAC MEETING
TAGS: PFOR, BE, NATO, NAC
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkvgwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/a7a32aa2-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009